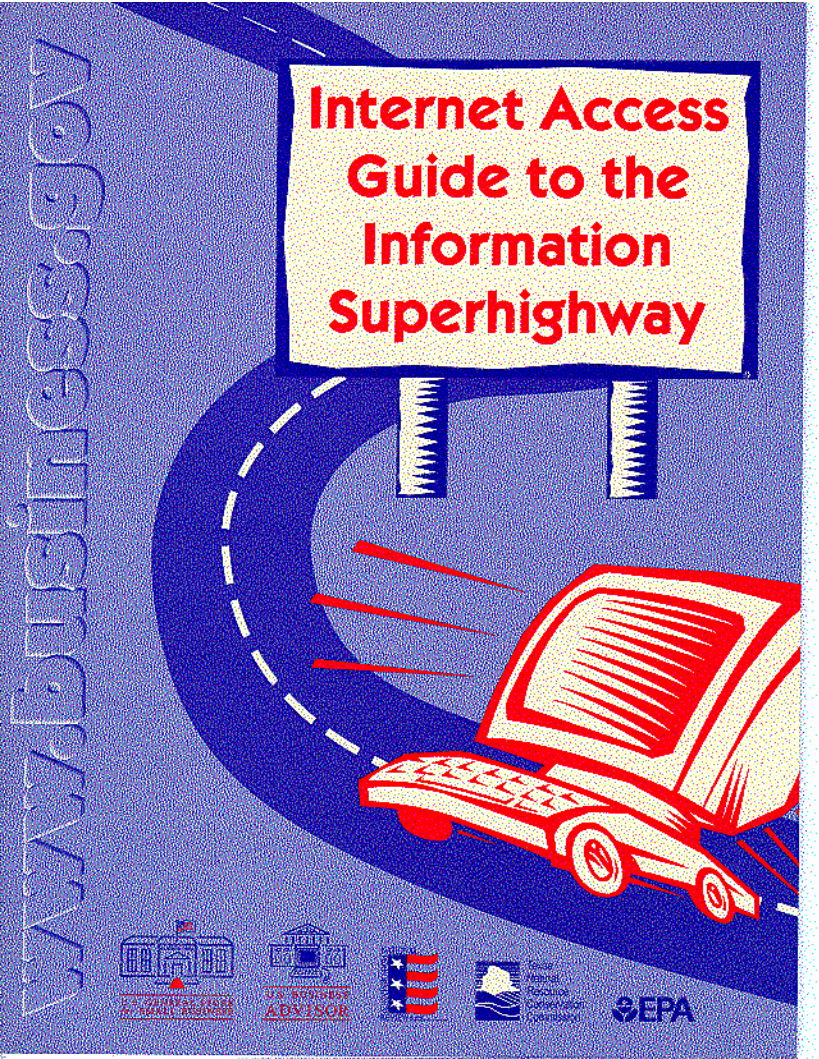
Internet Access Guide to the Information Superhighway



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Contents

The Internet ... What's It All About?

You've heard about, read about it, perhaps even been caught up in the excitement surrounding it … but what is the Internet really all about? And what can it mean to you? This publication offers an introduction to the Internet and some of its most widely used services. Its aim is to help you make good decisions about putting this important resource to work for you.

The power of the Internet

Imagine a medium that lets you communicate instantly with your customers … a tool that lets you advertise, sell, and even distribute your product 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year … a service that allows you to shop for the best price without leaving your home or office and without expensive long-distance phone calls.

All this is available right now … if you know where to look. Can you achieve instant communication? Yes—with an Internet e-mail program. Can you set up a "virtual store" to sell your goods and services on-line? Of course—on the Internet's World Wide Web. Can you shop at home and find the best price? Without a doubt—just get online and start surfing the Internet!

The Internet is already the most cost-effective communication medium in history, and it's quickly becoming the most cost-effective way to open a store and sell goods and services. The Internet is here, and it provides wonderful new opportunities, so read about it, study it, think about it … but don't miss this opportunity to put the Internet to work for you!

The Internet is the network of networks

A network is a group of computers connected together for the purpose of sharing information. Usually, participants in a network have something in common—some reason for wanting to link their computing resources. For example, many universities, companies, and government agencies use networks to share information.

The Internet is often called the network of networks because it connects thousands of these smaller, special-purpose networks. Linking networks makes it possible for users all over the world to share information ... just as if they were interacting with a colleague in the next office.

A short history of the Internet

It all started in the 1960s as a joint project of several universities and the Department of Defense. The goal was to set up a system of networks that would allow communication to continue in the event of nuclear disaster. Initial Internet growth was entirely within the government and university communities, but businesses soon saw its potential and jumped on board.

Three decades of expanding availability have produced astonishing growth. Today, not only are big users like universities and businesses rocketing through cyberspace, individual users are linking up and communicating in numbers almost beyond imagination.

Who pays for the Internet?

Essentially, everyone pays his/her own way on the Internet. Companies that resell Internet access (for example, MCI and Sprint) pay for large portions of the network, while individual users pay for the piece to which they are connected.

Available Internet services

The Internet offers lots of ways to share information. Chances are that you've heard at least a little about the World Wide Web and e-mail (electronic mail), and later chapters will focus on these two services. Take a look at the table below for a summary of the most widely used services.

Internet Services

Electronic mail (e-mail)	*Allows Internet users to send messages electronically to anyone, anywhere in the world who's also connected to the Internet.*
File transfer protocol (FTP)	*Used to copy files from one computer to another. FTP is often used to download free software from the Internet.*
Gopher	*Predecessor to the World Wide Web; allowed users to search series of menus, following hypertext links to other information.*
Mailing Lists	*Cyberspace equivalent of belonging to a special interest group. Users subscribe to a mailing list; notes posted to the mailing list are distributed via e-mail to all members.*
Newsgroups (Usenet)	*Similar to mailing lists, except that users "subscribe" only on their own local systems. Those interested follow discussions by way of a newsreader program running on their own computers.*
World Wide Web (WWW or Web)	*Provides the easiest interface to the Internet. Users run browsers on their systems to view documents that may include text, graphics, video, and audio components.*

Getting Connected ... What Does It Take?

Now that you've decided to make the leap into cyberspace, you'll need to get the hardware necessary to connect to the Internet, and you'll need to find an Internet Service Provider (ISP)—someone from whom you'll buy Internet connection services.

Choose the right hardware

It's quite possible to surf the Internet using a computer with a 386 microprocessor, a 14.4 baud (or slower) modem, and 4MB of RAM—but the connection will be so slow (pages will take a long time to appear on your monitor) that you probably won't find the experience worth pursuing after the initial excitement wears off. You'll be well-advised to buy the right equipment now, so that you can make the best possible use of your connection time.

These are hardware recommendations for satisfactory Internet connection:

- *486-33Mhz (or faster) computer*
- *28.8 modem*
- *8MB of RAM*
- *10MB of free disk space on the hard drive (As you surf the Web, your Web browser caches—writes to the hard drive—files you've already looked at. To speed things up, when you look at those pages again or when you look at other pages that use the same pictures, your browser loads them from your own hard drive, rather than from the source.)*

Choose the right Internet Service Provider

The most confusing thing about getting connected might be deciding which Internet Service Provider (ISP) to use. In many cities, you have multiple options, with new providers springing up almost weekly. Prices vary considerably, but so do services and equipment, so making comparisons can be difficult.

Here's a checklist to help you evaluate potential Internet Service Providers. The first couple of points require some explanation, so these topics are explored in some depth before the rest of the checklist is presented:

- *It's critical that your service provider have a fast link to the Internet. As mentioned earlier, your own connection to the Internet should be via a 28.8 baud modem. However, the ISP you choose should have a much faster line that can handle a large quantity of calls. The preferred network link is a T1—a line with a speed of 1,500,000 bauds.*

- *If you have a SLIP (Serial Line Internet Protocol) or PPP (Point-to-Point Protocol) account, your access to the Internet is comparable to the access provided to large companies or universities.*

Checklist—how does this Internet Service Provider stack up?

1. *Does this ISP have at least a T1 connection to the Internet? The performance of your service will suffer if the ISP is not connected directly to a T1 or T3; in particular, you may find that Web pages load very slowly.*
2. *Does this ISP provide 28.8 baud modems for your connection to their system? If not, even if you have a 28.8 modem, when you dial in and get connected, you'll only be using a portion of your modem's capacity. This can directly affect performance; Web pages may load very slowly.(Note: There are two connections involved in every Internet transaction; your connection to the ISP's system and the ISP's connection to the Internet.)*
3. *Does this ISP offer you a SLIP and/or PPP account? (Note: PPP is gradually replacing SLIP and is easier to configure.)*
4. *What is the ratio of phone lines to users? The provider should have approximately one phone line for every ten users—or you'll get busy signals when you try to connect.*
5. *How much does this ISP charge for its Internet connection? Does it make a flat rate available for unlimited access? The average cost for unlimited Internet access is $30/month, although fees vary widely. (Note: You'll need to make some decisions about how much time you plan to spend on the Internet.)*
6. *Is there a set-up fee? If the ISP lists a set-up fee, ask them to waive it.*
7. *Does this ISP offer free software (for example, Netscape, Eudora, and connectivity software)? If this ISP doesn't offer essential software at no cost, consider signing with an ISP that provides you with the programs you need for free.*
8. *Does this ISP provide free classes or other training? Does it offer technical support? Some ISPs provide training, but don't offer it unless asked. If this ISP charges for its training and technical support, consider signing with an ISP that offers eduction and support for free.*
9. *Is there a limit to the length of time you can stay connected in one session? Some ISPs offer service at incredibly low prices, but automatically disconnect you after one hour of connection. This can be very frustrating! (Note: You'll need to make some decisions about how long you want to stay connected.)*

Surfing the 'Net ... the World Wide Web

Widespread access to the World Wide Web (WWW or Web) is responsible for most of the recent excitement associated with the Internet. As described earlier, accessing the Internet using a Web browser allows you to view documents that might include text, pictures, sound, and video. The real power of the Web, however, is in its hyperlinking capability—you can easily follow links from one document to others with related information by simply clicking on highlighted words within the document you're viewing.

Web browsers

Web browsers are available for almost every type of computer made. As with all Internet resources, while you'll get satisfactory results regardless of the platform and/or browser you choose, some browsers have more capability than others.

Currently, the best-known and most widely-used browser is Netscape. Netscape is a high-level browser that supports all the kinds of information made available on the Internet. However, Netscape requires some configuration on your system, and if you're a new Internet user, you might find it difficult to manage this step.

If you're just starting to explore the Internet, you might be more comfortable using a service like America Online (AOL), which provides Internet service including connection to the Web via its own Web browser. AOL's Web browser doesn't support the advanced features used on some Web pages (like tables and animation), but it requires no difficult configuration—you can be up and surfing in less than an hour.

More information about using your Web browser comes later in this section.

URLs

Every piece of information on the Internet has an address called a URL (pronounced U-R-L or "earl"). URL stands for Uniform Resource Locator, and understanding how a URL works can help you find the information you need on the Internet.

This is an example of a URL:

http://www.si.edu/activity/exhibits/exsack.htm

Like all URLs, the one listed above consists of these parts:

protocol://machine name/path to object

In our example, the protocol is **http***, which stands for Hypertext Transfer Protocol. Http is the most common protocol for documents made available on the Web. Other available*

protocols include **ftp** *(for transferring files),* **gopher** *(for information in gopherspace),* **nntp** *(for newsgroup information), and* **file** *(for locally stored documents).*

In our example, the machine name is **www.si.edu**. *This is the name of the computer that's acting as a server to make this document available on the Internet. It might be useful to know that the last part of the machine name (the part that comes after the second period —in our example,* **.edu***) is the domain, and will always be one of the following:*

- **.com** *commercial organization*
- **.edu** *educational institution*
- **.gov** *government body*
- **.net** *network or Internet Service Provider*
- **.org** *non-profit organization*

Two letter extensions represent documents originating in a country outside the U.S.—for example, information coming from Japan carries the **.jp** *extension.*

The path to object reveals the location of the document on the computer system where it physically resides. In our example, the path is **/activity/exhibits/exsack.htm**. *The document called* **exsack.htm** *is found in a directory called* **exhibits**, *which is a subdirectory of a directory called* **activity**.

A couple of useful pieces of information about the names of documents:

- *Most document names on the Web end with the suffix* **.html** *or* **.htm**, *indicating that they've been created in (or converted to) HyperText Markup Language, the best format for Web documents. Some documents have the* **.txt** *extension. These are plain text documents—often created for another purpose—whose owners have decided to make them available on the Web, even though they don't make use of the Web's presentation, graphics, and hyperlinking capabilities.*

- *Sometimes you'll see a URL that seems to include a protocol, machine name, and perhaps a path, but no document name at all. In such cases, the name of the document is* **index.html**, *which is the default file loaded from a directory if no other file name is specified.*

After you've looked at a number of URLs, you'll begin to see a basic pattern, especially in the naming of a company or organization's home page (more on home pages later). For example, the home page for Outreach Communications is **http://www.outreach.com**; *the home page for the Microsoft Corporation is* **http://www.microsoft.com**. *Given that pattern, you can probably guess that if you want to order a pizza online, you can visit URL* **http://www.pizzahut.com** *(but online orders are only accepted in parts of California)!*

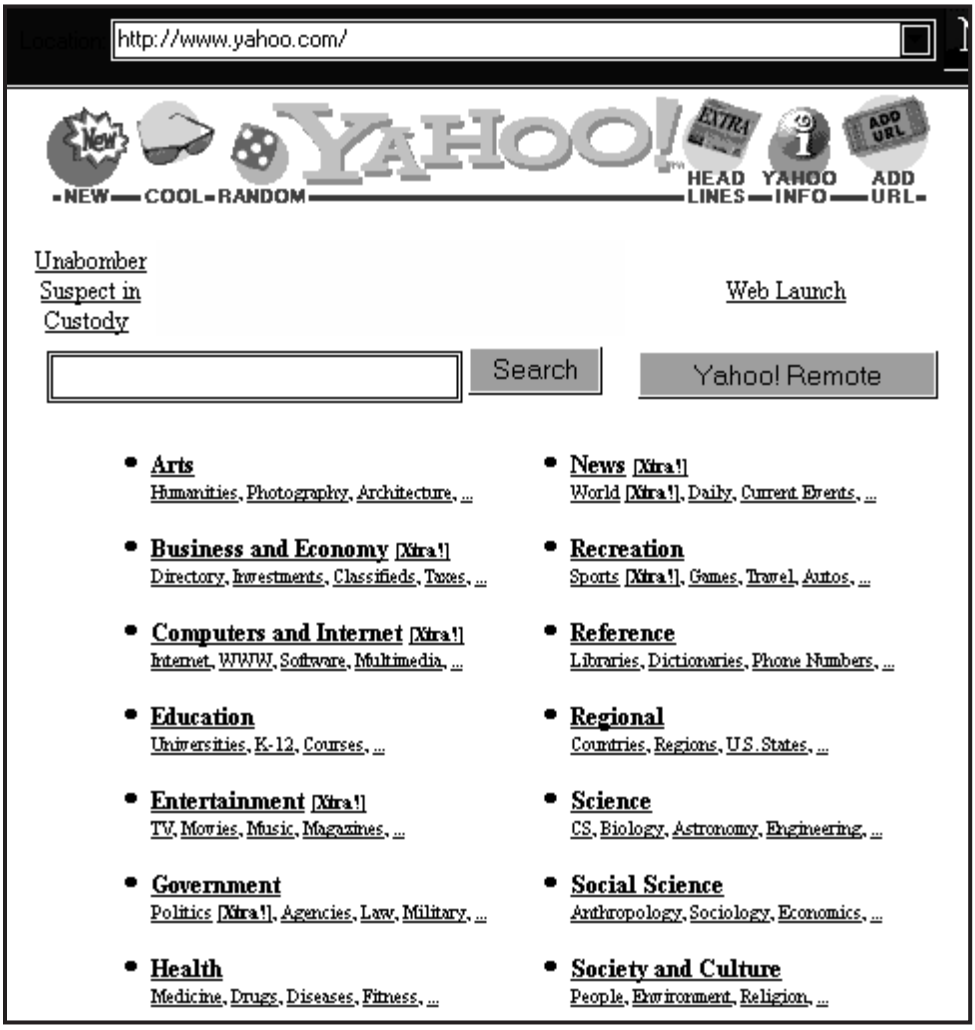
Now that you know what a URL is, you'll see them everywhere—on billboards, in magazine articles, and in print and television advertisements. Use them as interesting starting points for your Internet exploration.

Search engines

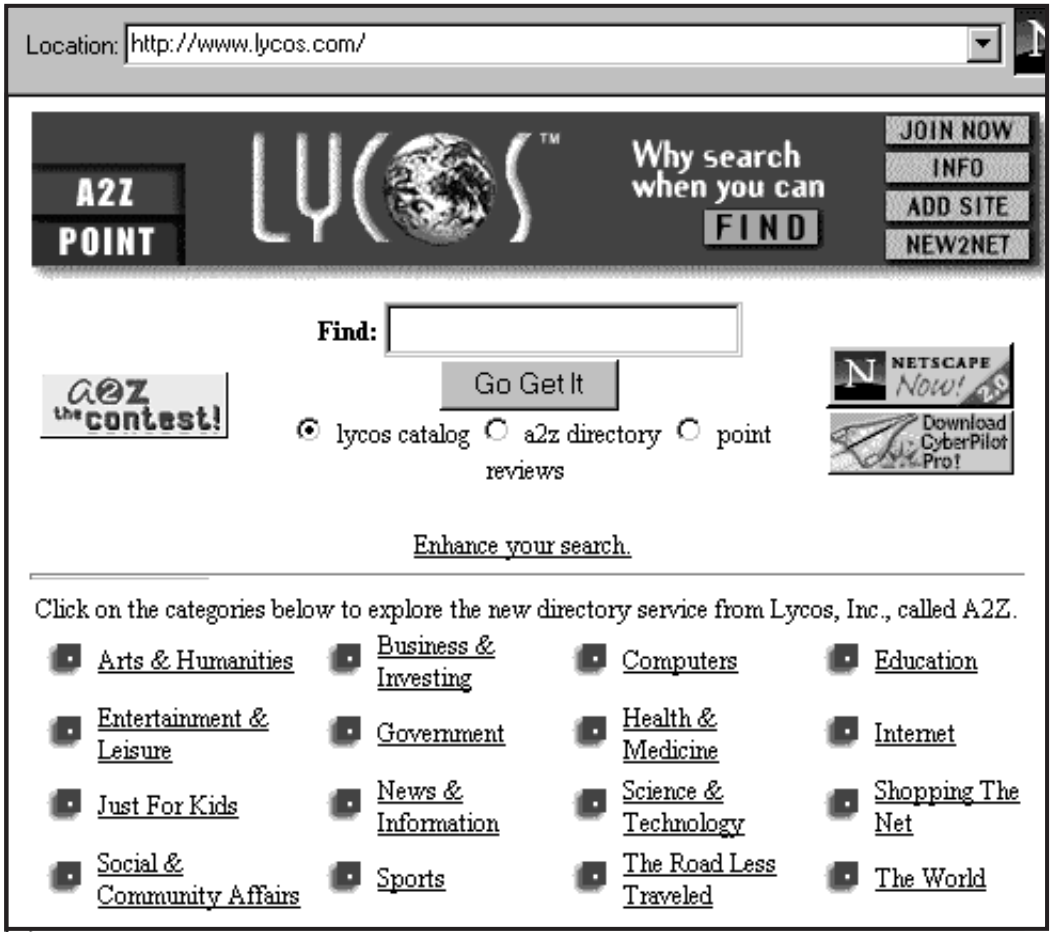
While guessing at URLs will help you find some information on the Web, not every URL follows the pattern you'd expect. For example, the URL for the Texas Lottery is **http://www.window.texas.gov/winngnos.html**. *Chances are you'd never find the page if you had to guess. Fortunately, there's a useful alternative means to locate information on the Web—search engines.*

There are many search engines, and each of them has its own strengths. Generally, they work like this: You enter some keyword search terms, often also using operators to further define what you want; the search engine searches its database of information about documents available on the Internet, then displays a list of documents that match your keywords. We've chosen three search engines to show you what accessing the Web this way is all about.

*The first is one of the oldest and best-known pages on the entire Web—***Yahoo** *(***http://www.yahoo.com***). Yahoo offers both an index to the Web and a useful search tool. Particularly if you are new to the Internet and want to get a feel for what information is out there, this is a great place to visit.*

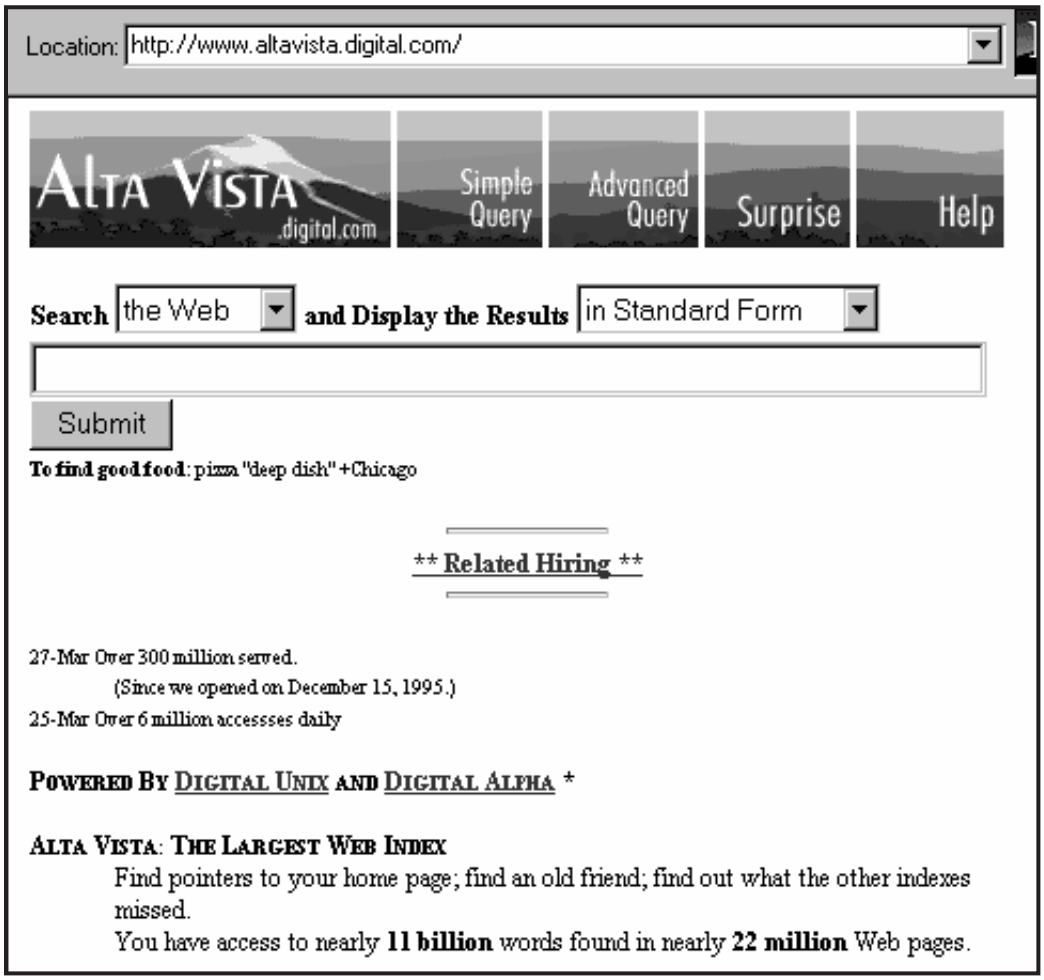


Lycos *(***http://www.lycos.com***) is another terrific search tool. Lycos builds its database by sending a computer robot to visit every page on the Internet, looking for key words (for example, words that appear in the title or a heading).*



One very helpful feature of Lycos is that results are "ranked"—the program examines your search query and estimates the degree to which each match will meet your needs. The results are displayed in descending order, with the document most likely to provide the information you're seeking at the top of the list. Many search engines provide similar "ranking" capability.

Finally, Digital's **Alta Vista** *search engine (***http://www.altavista.digital.com***) is very useful, especially if you're having trouble finding what you need via Yahoo or Lycos. Like Lycos, Alta Vista's robot visits every page on the Internet to build its database. Unlike Lycos, however, Alta Vista indexes every word of every page, creating a massive database. When you're doing a search, you're likely to get an overwhelming number (often thousands) of "hits" on your search term, but with practice, you'll be able to narrow your search and get a reasonable number of returns.*

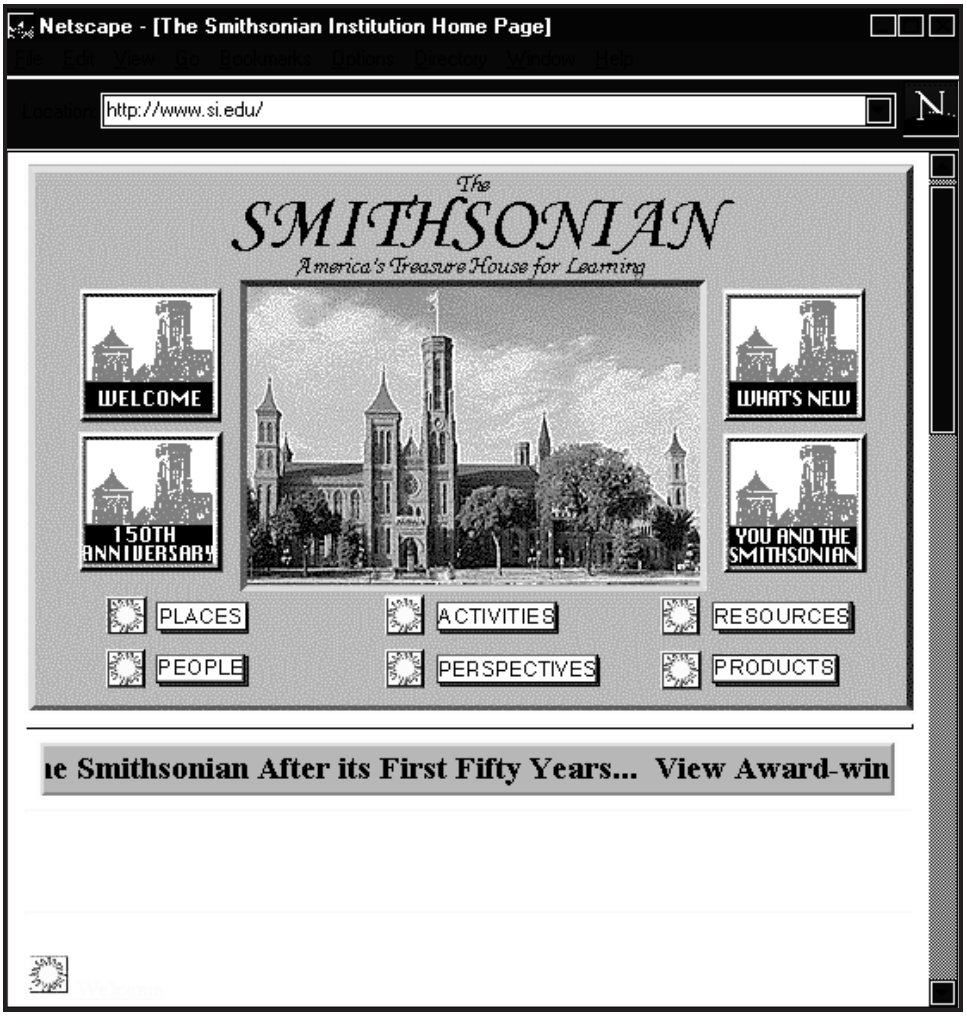


Experiment with different search engines … with experience, you'll find that one or another seems to produce the most consistently useful results for you. While you can easily do a simple keyword search using almost any search tool, it can be helpful to zero in on one search engine and learn how to use its more sophisticated search-defining capability. A small investment of time spent in learning how to thoughtfully structure a search can produce excellent results; you'll be able to plunge into the vast store of information shared on the Internet and quickly find just the piece that answers your question!

Using a Web browser

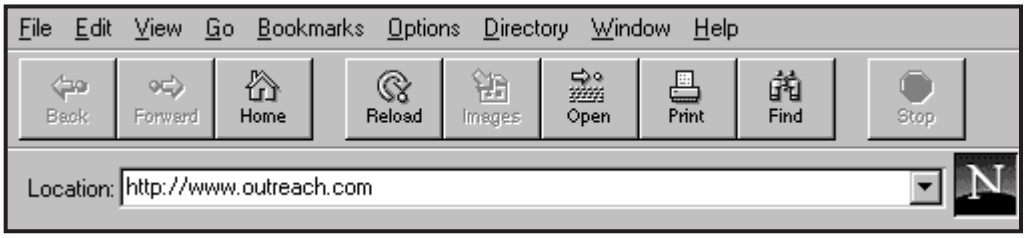
As described earlier, there are many Web browsers currently available—Mosaic, Netscape, Internet Explorer, Web Explorer, and many others. Each has its own characteristics, but all basically work the same way. The descriptions in this section are specific to the Netscape browser, but you'll find most of these features offered by other browsers, as well.

When you're surfing the Internet, you'll often hear or see references to the home page for a company, an organization, or an indvidual. A home page is like the front door to a house, only it's the front door to a body of information. From an organization's home page, you'll be able to link to all the other pages that the organization has chosen to make available on the Internet. For example, this is the home page for the Smithsonian Institute.



From this home page, you can link to additional information about programs, activities, exhibits, schedules, and many other museum services and resources. You can read press releases, plan a visit ... even listen to a welcome message from the Institute's secretary (if your system can play audio files).

All Web browsers provide a series of buttons on a toolbar that will help you move around among documents and perform routine tasks. This is Netscape's toolbar.



The **Back** *button lets you move back to the previous page viewed. If you've used the Back button to view a previous page, the* **Forward** *button returns you to the later one. The* **Home** *button takes you to whatever page you've designated as the page that is displayed when you start Netscape.*

The **Reload** *button refreshes the page you're currently viewing. Pressing* **Images** *reloads just the graphics (sometimes they display better after a reload).*

To move directly to a new Web page when you know its URL, press the **Open** *button and type the URL in the dialog box that displays. (You can accomplish the same thing in Netscape by deleting the URL displayed in the* **Location** *box and typing in the one you'd like to visit, then pressing the* **Enter** *key.)*

Clicking on the **Print** *button prints the document you're currently viewing, while pressing the* **Find** *button lets you search for a word or phrase within the document. The* **Stop** *button lets you stop loading a page, if you decide that it's not what you need after all.*

As noted, the **Location** *box displays the current URL. Move to a new URL by deleting the URL displayed in the* **Location** *box and typing in the one you'd like to visit, then pressing the* **Enter** *key.*

The final important piece of information in the toolbar area is the **Browser icon** *displayed at the right of the* **Location** *box. If there's some movement in the icon—for example, in Netscape if shooting stars are whizzing around the "N"—you'll know that the page has not yet finished loading and you need to be patient a bit longer.*

Bookmarks/Hotlists

Once you start to navigate around the Web, you'll undoubtedly come across pages that you'd like to revisit one day. You could make a note of the URL on a scrap of paper, but URLs can be very long (and sometimes tricky) and scraps of paper tend to disappear. A better alternative is to electronically add the URL to a list of URLs you want to keep. Netscape calls this your **Bookmarks**, *and it's accessed from the menu bar at the top of the window; most other browsers call it a* **Hotlist** *or* **Quicklist**. *Whatever its name, this useful feature allows you to instantly return to a listed page by simply clicking on the document's title in your list.*

Using E-Mail ... Instant Electronic Communication

Electronic mail (or e-mail) is one of the most powerful, widely-used resources associated with the Internet. It allows you to communicate instantly with anyone, anywhere in the world, using any kind of computer and any kind of operating system … as long as that person also has an Internet connection.

In some way, e-mail works pretty much like traditional mailing options—you address a letter, write your message, and send your letter. The difference is speed—instead of taking days to arrive, your message reaches its destination within minutes.

It's impossible to overstate the importance of e-mail in today's business climate. E-mail allows you to send quotes to customers, answer support questions, document decisions arrived at during phone conversations—all quickly and efficiently. For example, the availability of e-mail makes it reasonable for a small business owner in Texas to work with a customer needing her services in England. In the days before e-mail, both parties would have been dependent on expensive long distance phone lines and shipping options for transacting business. With e-mail, exchange of documents, charts, graphics, programs, and letters is inexpensive and almost instant.

E-mail addresses

This is an example of an e-mail address:

julief@outreach.com

Like all e-mail addresses, the one listed above consists of these parts:

username@companyname.domain

In our example, the username is **julief**, *the company name is* **outreach**, *and the domain is* **.com**. *(E-mail domains are the same as the URL domains discussed earlier.)*

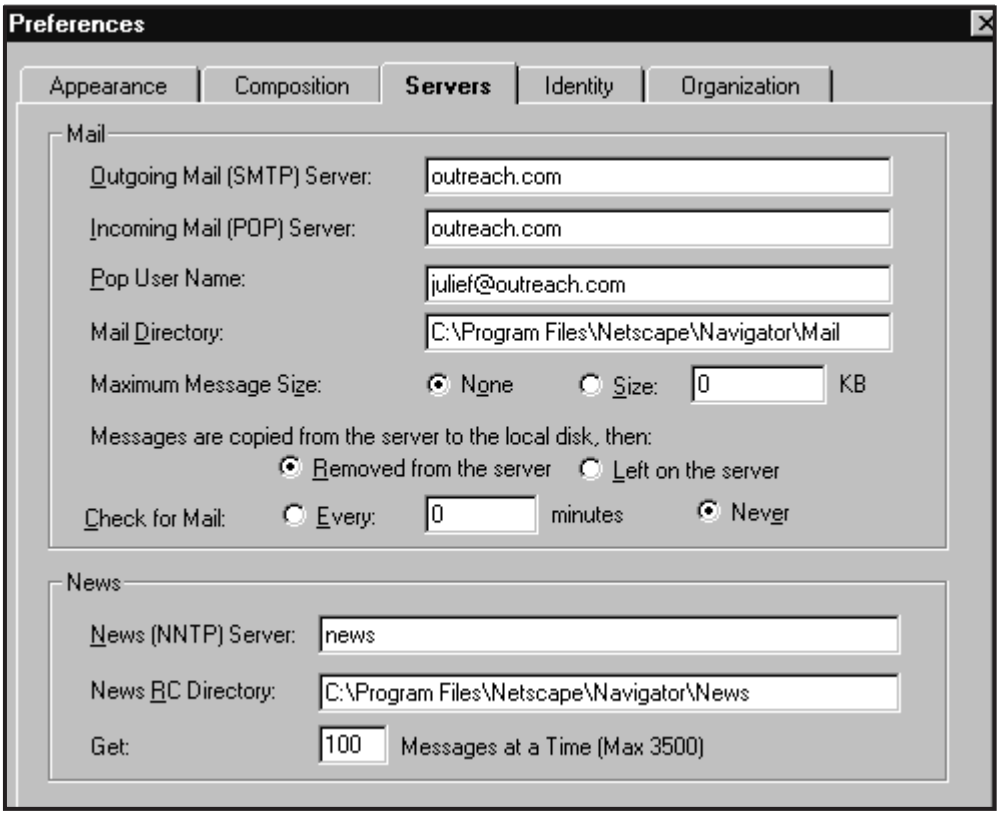
Setting up e-mail

There are many e-mail programs available—Eudora, CCMail, and many others. Each has its own characteristics, but all basically work the same way. The descriptions in this section are specific to the Netscape e-mail program, but you'll find most of these features offered by other e-mail systems. (Note: these descriptions are for Netscape version 2.0; if you don't know which version you have, select **Help** *from the menu bar, then select* **About Netscape** *from the menu that displays.)*

Chances are that receiving and sending e-mail will require some configuration on your system. If you're using Netscape mail, select **Options** *from the menu bar, then select* **Mail**

and News Preferences *from the menu that is displayed. (If you're using another mail program, look for a similar set of e-mail configuration screens.)*

Netscape's **Preferences** *dialog box provides five tabs; you'll need to work with the* **Servers** *tab, then the* **Identity** *tab. First choose the* **Servers** *tab to display the following page:*



Your Internet Service Provider will provide information about the name(s) of your mail server(s). Type that name(s)—it's frequently the same machine—in the **Outgoing Mail** *and* **Incoming Mail** *fields. Your own user name for the Internet account goes in the* **User Name** *field. (Look for similar fields if you're using another mail program.)*

The **Mail Directory** *information is important, because this is where all your e-mail is stored when it's downloaded from the server. You'll want to give careful consideration to the directory into which your mail is placed, since anyone using your machine could read it. (Other mail programs may give this field another name; look for an opportunity to define where in your directory structure your Received mail and copies of your Sent mail should be stored.)*

Netscape's default **Maximum Message Size** *is* **None***; that allows you to receive attached files (for example, big text documents, graphics, or programs). Sending documents and other large files between locations is an important, productive way to use e-mail; leaving this field set to the default will allow you to do so. (Your non-Netscape mail program may offer a similar field meant to give you the option of filtering huge files coming to you via e-mail.)*

Netscape also lets you remove messages from the server after they've been copied to your local disk, rather than leaving them on the server. If you leave messages on the server, anyone with system administration authority on that machine will be able to read your messages. Whichever mail program you choose, electing to remove your messages from the server after they've been downloaded to your local system is a wise choice.

Checking for mail every 10 minutes works well for most users. There's little reason to check more frequently; you may find that for your needs, a longer interval is fine.

Occasionally, very frequent checking for new mail can cause problems. Sometimes e-mail includes attached material; these attachments can be very large files. If you're working on your computer when your e-mail program detects new mail and starts to download it, the CPU required to download a large attached file (for example, a spreadsheet) may tie up your entire system for awhile. If you receive lots of large attached files by e-mail, the more frequently your program checks for new mail, the more often your system may be unavailable for other work.

If you use Netscape, once you've completed the **Servers** *setup, open the* **Identity** *tab to display this page (other mail program request similar information):*

This section is easy to configure. Type your name where you're prompted for **Your Name** *and your e-mail address where it says* **Your Email** *(your Internet Service Provider will assign this). The* **Reply to Address** *is almost always identical to the* **Your Email** *address.* **Your Organization** *is the name of your company. The* **Signature File** *will automatically be added to the bottom of every message you send if you identify its location on your hard drive here. Here's an example of a signature file:*

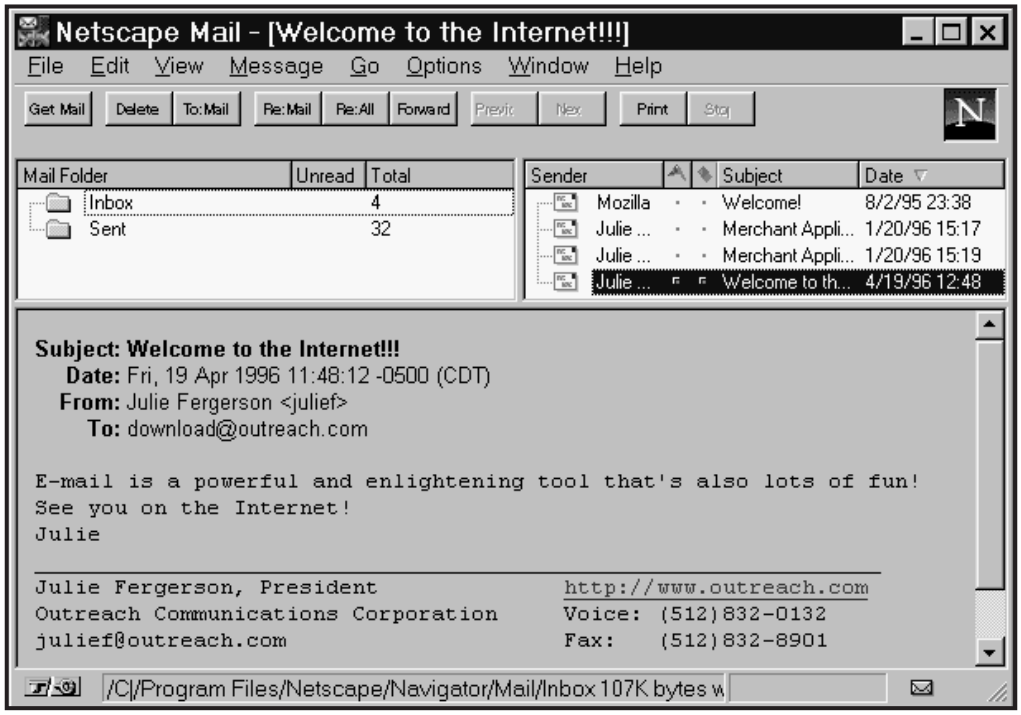
```
Julie Fergerson, President                  http://www.outreach.com
Outreach Communications Corporation         Voice: (512)832-0132
julief@outreach.com                         Fax: (512)329-0114
```

Don't make your signature more than four lines long; you'll receive nasty e-mail criticizing your waste of Internet resources.

Using e-mail

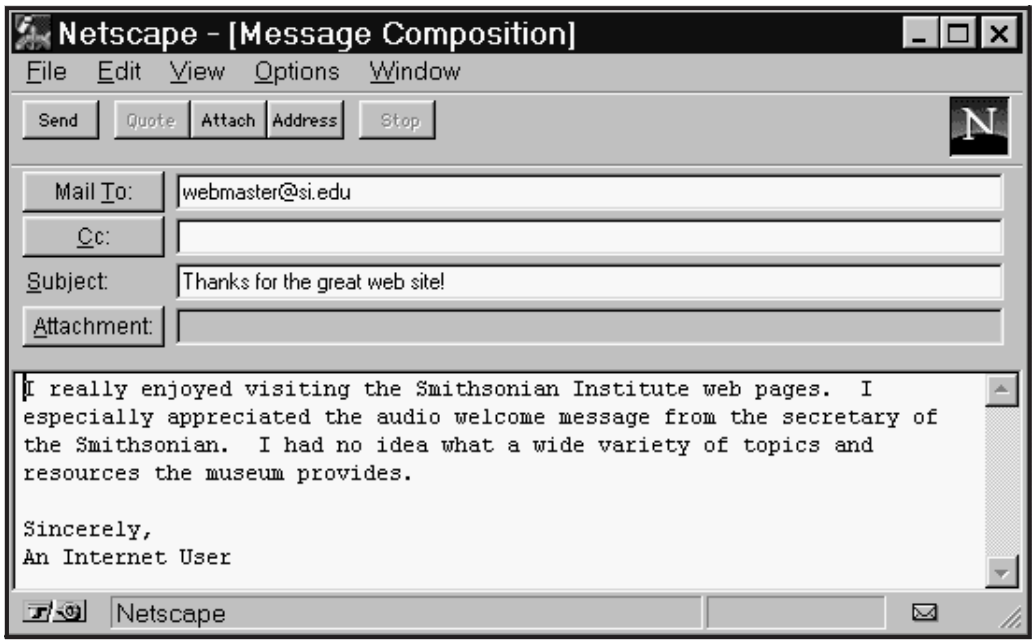
Again, the examples shown here are specific to Netscape's e-mail program, but you'll find that most e-mail programs work in a similar fashion.

To open Netscape mail, select **Window** *from the menu bar, then select* **Netscape Mail** *from the menu that displays. You'll be prompted for your password (provided by your Internet Service Provider). Your display will look similar to this one:*



Whichever mail program you've chosen, to read your mail or refer to old mail, look for a **Mail Folder** *(or similarly named) section on your screen. New messages are in your* **Inbox** *if you're using Netscape (sometimes referred to as New Mail in other programs). A copy of every note you've sent is found in your* **Sent** *folder. Click on the folder you'd like to work with to display a list of messages currently in that folder (right center in the example above). Click on one of the messages in the list to read it.*

To send an e-mail message via Netscape, select **File** *from the menu bar, then select* **New Mail Message** *from the menu that is displayed (other mail programs will offer similar menus or icons). Your display will look similar to the example that follows.*



Type the recipient's e-mail address in the **Mail To** *field. If you want to send the message to multiple recipients, type a comma between their e-mail addresses. If you want to copy the message to someone, type that person's e-mail address in the* **Cc** *field. (Generally, you'll put someone's address in the* **Mail To** *field if you want a response, and in the* **Cc** *field if you just want to keep him/her informed.)*

In the **Subject** *field, type a brief description about the message's topic. You can use the* **Attachment** *button to include files you want to send with your message (for example, an Excel spreadsheet or an MS Word document).*

Once you've filled in the information described above, type the body of your message in the space provided, then click on **Send** *to transmit the message.*

To reply to an e-mail message using the Netscape mail program, choose **Re:Mail** *from the toolbar to reply to the sender. If you want to reply to everyone who received the original message (including those on the Cc list), choose* **Re:All**. *Be very careful if you choose* **Re:All**; *you may be sending your reply to thousands of recipients! (If you're using a different mail program, menu items and icons may be slighly different than those described in this paragraph, but you'll have similar options available.)*

A word about using e-mail wisely

If you're feeling angry or upset and are tempted to send someone a not-so-nice message, write the note, but consider putting it aside for a couple of days before deciding whether to send it. E-mail is a new medium that allows instant communication … but instant reactions aren't always prudent. If you'll just use some common sense, you'll find that e-mail is a powerful, enlightening tool that's also lots of fun!

Appendix I
Some Great URLs

*Here's a summary of the URLs mentioned in this **Internet Access Guide**, along with a couple of bonus Web sites you might enjoy visiting. Check them out as you begin your Internet explorations!*

URL	Site
http://www.tnrcc.state.tx.us	*Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission*
http://www.outreach.com	*Outreach Communications Corporation*
http://www.microsoft.com	*Microsoft*
http://www.pizzahut.com	*Pizza Hut*
http://www.window.texas.gov winngnos.html	*Texas Lottery*
http://home.netscape.com	*Netscape*
http://www.yahoo.com	*Yahoo search engine*
http://www.lycos.com	*Lycos search engine*
http://www.altavista.digital.com	*Alta Vista search engine*
http://www.si.edu	*Smithsonian Institute*
http://www.business.gov	*US Business Advisor*
http://www.nasa.gov	*NASA*
http://www.un.org	*United Nations*
http://stis.nsf.gov	*National Science Foundation*
http://www.usps.gov	*US Post Office*
http://www.utexas.edu	*University of Texas*

Appendix II
Glossary

A

Alta Vista
Digital's Internet search engine. Large database often produces very large number of matches for search terms (http://www.altavista.digital.com).

American Online (AOL)
Popular commercial information service provider with an easy-to-use graphical interface.

B

baud
Measure of modem speed equal to one signal per second.

backbone
Name given to the heart of the Internet, composed of portions owned by large companies who in turn resell Internet access.

browser
An Internet program designed to let users access the World Wide Web and many other Internet services through a graphical interface. Browsers are available for almost every type of computer and operating system.

C

.com
Commercial domain

D

domain
Final part of a machine name (the part that comes after the second period—for example, on the machine called www.outreach.com, .com is the domain). The most common domains are: .com, .edu, .net, .org, .gov.

E

.edu
Education domain

electronic mail (e-mail)
Internet service that allows users to compose messages and send them electronically through the networks to other Internet users.

F

File Transfer Protocol (FTP)
Internet service that allows users to transfer information between machines on the Internet. Often used to download free software from the Internet.

G

gopher
Information retrieval program created at the University of Minnesota to organize text information available on the Internet into hyperlinked menus. Predecessor of the World Wide Web.

.gov
Government domain.

H

hostname
Name of a machine connected to the Internet (for example, www.outreach.com).

HyperText Markup Language (HTML)
The industry standard language used to format documents for the World Wide Web.

HyperText Transport Protocol (HTTP)
The protocol used by the World Wide Web.

I

Internet
The "network of networks."

Internet Service Provider (ISP)
A company that sells Internet service.

L

Lycos
An Internet search engine. Lycos' database is continually updated by a computer "robot" that visits every page on the Internet, indexing key words (http://www.lycos.com).

M

machine name
Name of a machine connected to the Internet.

mailing list
An on-line special interest group. All members receive all postings to the group via e-mail.

modem
Modulator-demodulator. Allows your computer to talk to another computer over telephone lines.

N

.net
Domain of a network or Internet Service Provider.

Netscape
Currently the best-known and most widely-used Web browser.

newsgroup
An online discussion group devoted to a specific topic.

O

object
Last part of a URL; the specific item (text document, picture, video file, sound file) to be accessed.

on-line
Actions performed when you are connected to another computer.

.org
Domain of a non-profit organization.

P

protocol
A standardized mechanism by which computers on a network communicate and exchange information.

Point-to-Point Protocol (PPP)
Networking protocol that gives your computer the same access to the Internet as a much larger machine, even though your connection is via a modem and normal phone line.

S

search engine
Service designed to let you find information on the Internet using keyword search queries.

Search Line Internet Protocol (SLIP)
Networking protocol that gives your computer the same access to the Internet as a much larger machine, even though your connection is via a modem and normal phone line.

T

T1
A high-speed network link used on the Internet.

U

Uniform Resource Locator (URL)
The unique address given to every piece of information on the Internet.

W

World Wide Web (WWW)
Service that provides users an easy way to browse information available on the Internet.

Y

Yahoo
Search engine that indexes everything on the Internet (http://www.yahoo.com).